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their homes because many of them fled from fear into the Bad Lands. I hope every paper in the land will open a broadside on whoever has done this."

When the battle reported at Daly's ranch is sifted, it turns out that one of the men, feeling pity for some starving Indian women, gave them two rams. The first intense battle at Pine Ridge was purely a newspaper space-filler; no one at Pine Ridge, I have accurate information, knew of the battle. When General Brook sent out to tell the Sioux to come into the agency, people interested in keeping them out told them they would be made prisoners and sent to the Indian Territory. The lower class of white people want troops because it puts money in their pockets; men who received but \$1 a day before the troops came now get \$5. One man who has a contract for forwarding supplies to Pine Ridge from Rushville gets \$561 a day; people have contracts for supplying troops at Pine Ridge with three hundred tons of hay and over two hundred pounds of oats alone.

Newspaper correspondents sent out there have been determined to telegraph something; so the military authorities have been annoyed and the good work they might have done has been hampered by sensational press despatches. All these mistakes, with the false move of killing Sitting Bull, have forced an Indian war.

To make this impossible in the future there is but one course to take. It is absurd to pauperize the Indian by giving him either food or clothing; it is beyond reason to place any people under autocratic rule in this country; it is useless to give money destined for private individuals into the hands of politicians; not that our politicians are as a class dishonest, but that a temptation to cheat what people call the government, not realizing it is the people, seems too great for hitherto-honest persons to resist. We ought no longer to try impossibilities, but at once make each Indian amenable to the law of the State or territory in which he resides by making him a citizen. Treat him as a responsible individual, as has been done in Nebraska, and he will earn his own living, be willing to educate his children, learn not to be cheated. Do not chain him to the ground, as in Nebraska, by forcing him to farm whether he wills or not; let him rent his land and practise a trade there or elsewhere.

Until the Indian is a citizen, subject to the same privileges and penalties as are other men in this country, we may expect war, expensive in loss of life, loss of money, and loss of prosperity in that part of the country where it occurs.

GEORGE TRUMAN KERCHEVAL.

THE CONVICT AND THE CHURCH.

THE recent action of a well-known church in determining to retain upon its roll of membership a man convicted of the crime of forgery and sentenced to a term of imprisonment extending over seventeen years has very naturally attracted a good deal of attention and called forth no small amount of comment. In some quarters the church in question has been warmly commended for a course which is declared to be precisely in the spirit of the founder of Christianity, while by others its action has been roundly denounced.

Without naming any names, let us consider the facts for a moment.

S— was a man whose reputation both socially and as a business man

was apparently unimpeachable. He possessed the entire confidence of all who knew him. He was engaged in a lucrative business, having two partners who believed him thoroughly trustworthy. He was an active member of a prominent church, and an earnest worker in its Sunday-school. His social position was good, and his name was gladly sought to be added to the boards of directors of charitable and benevolent institutions. He had a charming family, and, while he lived well, there was no suspicion that he was living beyond his means. Nor did he, so far as is known, possess unwarrantably expensive tastes or indulge in extravagant habits. To all appearances he was a prosperous, successful, happy, and contented man.

Suddenly it was revealed to his partners, by an examination of the firm's accounts, that this man, in whom they had reposed the most absolute and unquestioning confidence, was a forger. S—— for six years had been living a lie. He had been a conscious and consummate hypocrite. He had taken advantage of and most cruelly deceived those who trusted him. His method of operation had been to "raise" certificates of stock—that is, to increase the number of shares represented by certificates in the possession of his firm—and then dispose of them and avail himself of the fraudulent proceeds. This operation he had repeated many times, until the sum secured by his forgeries was counted by hundreds of thousands.

It is certainly to S——'s credit that, when the terrible discovery was made known to him, he made no denial and no attempt to leave the country, as perhaps he might have done. On the contrary, he lent his aid in ascertaining the full extent of his criminal acts, and voluntarily surrendered himself to the authorities. More than that, he was willing to plead guilty to the charge of forgery and prevent the necessity of a trial; but, inasmuch as the crime was one which might involve life-imprisonment, this was not permissible under the law, and a trial was accordingly had, although no defence was interposed.

Hardly had he been taken to prison before S—— wrote a letter to his pastor, setting forth that he had repented of his sins, and believed that he had received divine forgiveness. This letter was read at a meeting of the church held a few days later, and on the recommendation of the pastor, who had visited the convict in prison, the church voted to retain S—— on its rolls of membership, believing, as was stated in its formal resolutions, that if he ever needed the church's help and sympathy, it was in the situation in which he then found himself.

This is probably the first time in the history of Christianity that a convict in striped clothes, and undergoing a long term of imprisonment on his own confession of evil-doing, has been allowed to remain in good and regular standing as a member of a Christian church!

There are circumstances conceivable in which a church might pursue such a course toward one of its number without laying itself open to any adverse criticism whatever. Suppose, for example, that S—— had committed a single fault of a criminal nature; that he had yielded for once to a momentary temptation; and that he had confessed this to his pastor and his fellow-church-members, expressed his contrition therefor, and then bowed to the majesty of the law and gone to prison. In a rightly-constituted church, permeated by the right spirit, the question of dropping him from membership would never have been raised for a moment.

But how different is the case we are considering! Here the repentance is merely *ex post facto*. Not one solitary crime has been repented of and con-

fessed, but a long series has been committed, extending over six years, without the slightest sign of confession until the exposure has been made and concealment is no longer possible. When a prison suit has been donned, and temptation no longer confronts the convict because he is wholly beyond its reach, it is easy to repent and promise restitution, and ask the forgiveness of one's church and the privilege of remaining one of its members.

Here it is pertinent to inquire what degree or kind of crime would be sufficient to justify the church in question, in the estimation of its own members, in refusing to extend further fellowship to one of their number who had fallen into sin. If forgery carried on for years by a man professing Christianity is not, would burglary, or highway robbery, or murder, or any one of a hundred other crimes for which the criminal code provides penalties? Surely, it would seem, the line must be drawn somewhere; but where? That is the question. A wife-murderer on the church-membership books in unimpeachable standing is the logical consequence of the action which forms the subject of this article: all that is necessary is that the murderer, after conviction of his crime, shall write to his pastor making confession and beseeching forgiveness; whereupon nothing but the noose or the electric current shall terminate the unfortunate man's active connection with the church which he has disgraced and brought into contempt.

But, says S——'s chief apologist, his pastor, he committed his first forgery when suffering from nervous prostration. But what about the other ones? What about the six years of basest hypocrisy? And does not the apologist see that he opens wide the door for the justification of every possible sort of crime? Would nervous prostration excuse the murderer, the sneak-thief, the rehypothecator of bonds, or even the miserable wretch who steals a loaf of bread in order to keep his wife and children from starvation? Away with such silly sentimentalism!

But, says another defender of the church, there can be little doubt of the genuineness of S——'s repentance, and in all probability he was glad when the exposure came and he could quit leading the hollow life he had been living for so long. It must have been a great relief to him, and doubtless he went to prison with a glad heart. Well, we should really like to know what there was to hinder him from ending the lie at any moment he pleased during the years when he chose to be one thing and to seem another! Voluntary confession on his part would assuredly have afforded proof of a heart not wholly bad, and impelled the holding out of a helping hand. Such a course would have been manly and straightforward. It would have commanded respect at least.

The fact is that such a series of crimes as this person was guilty of strike a blow at the very foundations of business and of the social structure. The impairing of confidence in one's fellow-men is a very serious matter. If the comrade who has stood shoulder to shoulder with you, on whom you have felt that you could rely as firmly almost as on your very self—if he falters, stumbles, gives way utterly, your faith, and all faith, in humanity receives a violent wrench, from which it cannot soon, if ever, recover. Have a care not to underestimate the baseness of such a crime; have a care not to overestimate the soundness of the repentance that so speedily and so glibly follows.

Still another voice is heard in the way of apology, and it declares that the action of the church in question is altogether in the line of the Christianity of Jesus. Has this apologist forgotten the thunders of denunciation

hurled by the gentle man of Nazareth against the hypocritic Pharisees of his day and generation? "*Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but are within full of dead men's bones, and all uncleanness. . . . Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?*" There is no lack of vigor and barb in these words, and if they do not "fit the crime" we are considering, I do not know where to find any that do.

"Muscular Christianity" is a phrase that has had a considerable vogue. Whatever the specific meaning put into the words at any time, it is certain that the Christianity which found expression in the action of this church towards its convict member had little muscularity about it. To my mind, at all events, it was decidedly flabby. Doubtless, had the opportunity presented itself, this church would have compounded the felony and prevented its member's crime from becoming known to the public. Society and the church owe a higher duty than that to themselves. Our penal systems are far from perfect, and come far short of accomplishing the results that ought not unreasonably to be expected from them. But they must be applied with impartiality to all. There cannot be one law and one punishment for the rich man who commits forgery, and another law and another punishment for the poor man who yields to temptation. Nor will the churches do their duty so long as they sternly condemn evil-doing in one and wink at it in another. Who knows whether S——'s alleged repentance and his remaining an unchallenged member of — Church may not be employed within a few years as an argument in favor of his pardon? It is easily possible. Nay, it is easily possible that a man shrewd enough to carry on a series of forgeries for six years without detection is shrewd enough not only to foresee this, but to make plans for it. Under similar circumstances a wise church would "*beware of the leaven of the Pharisees.*"

By all means let Christianity be tender, loving, patient, long-suffering, forgiving; but let its churches, its professors, and its pastors and teachers beware of namby-pamby sentimentalism!

EMERSON PALMER.